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The American MUSIC LOVER

A REVIEW FOR THE MODERN HOME

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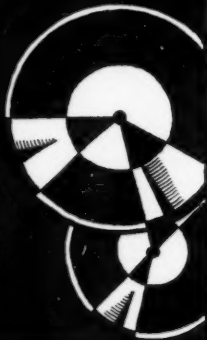
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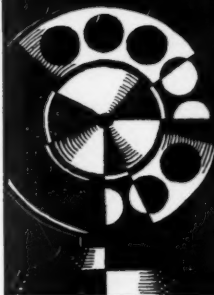
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The American Music Lover

for JUNE

1935

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ON A LIGURIAN HILLSIDE

Northern Italy

Here, on an afternoon in June
The wind in the pine tree sang a tune,
As strangely moving as anything
Heard on a muted violin string.

And in the distance sun and sea
Intermingled in mystic harmony;
Like unseen choristers content
Softly to chant an accompaniment.

Faint music, lost in yesteryear,
The eye brings back to an eager ear;
For he who visualizes Nature's spell,
Her moods of music knows fullwell.

EDITORIAL

THE death of Senator Cutting of New Mexico, in an aeroplane accident in Kansas, this past month, removed from our midst an ardent music lover and an enthusiastic record collector. Senator Cutting owned a large and varied collection of records, from which he derived a great deal of pleasure when he was at leisure in his home.

Greatly interested in folk music, as well as classical and popular music, the Senator had ordered from Spain — just prior to his death — a large collection of Iberian folk recordings.

He was a staunch reader of the defunct *Music Lovers' Guide* and had but recently expressed his approbation of *The American Music Lover*, for whom in the near future he had promised to write an article.

We lament the death of Senator Cutting, because in public life there are too few men of his calibre, whose interests are not narrowed to politics and business exclusive of a true enjoyment of the arts, and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to his family.

* * * *

The reaper death has been busy this past month. He has removed from our midst two distinguished composers — Paul Dukas, the Frenchman, and Charles Martin Loeffler, the American.

The music of the latter is not known to the record buyers for to date none of his works have been recorded; but this omission will soon be taken care of, we are informed.

Loeffler, like Delius, was much of a recluse. He lived outside Boston, where from 1883 to 1903 he served as a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He was not hasty in his composing, in fact, he was almost over-scrupulous in the preparation of his music, and many were the revisions to which one composition was subjected before it was placed before the public.

We expect to publish articles on Loeffler and Dukas in early issues.

* * * *

The latest "voice of the past" on records is a recording of Handel's *Angels Ever Bright and Fair* made by Emma Albani, one of the greatest of all dramatic sopranos. It will be made available in the near future by the International Record Collectors' Club.

Just when this famous singer made this recording we do not know, but since she retired from public life in 1906, we believe it was before that date. We expect to publish a review of this recording in our July issue.

* * * *

It is gratifying to us to know that Alma Kitchell, the eminent contralto, who was given us some fine song recitals over radio, has made some recordings for Columbia. Her first record release, we understand, will be the newly discovered *Ophelia Lieder* by Brahms, which this singer introduced in this country in an NBC Music Guild program on February 21st. We have requested Columbia to allow Miss Kitchell to sing some Robert Franz' songs.

Robert Franz *and the German Lied*

BY PHILIP MILLER

IMAGINE, if you can, a German Stephen Foster with the technique of a Hugo Wolf. Absurd as this sounds, it is a fairly accurate description of Robert Franz. The melodies of Franz are quite as much of the people as those of Foster, but the positions are reversed. Foster created a folk-music for a people that had none, but German folk-music created Franz. The American has been taken to the hearts of the world, but the German has been doomed to respectful oblivion. If he is not the forgotten man of music it is because men cannot forget what they have never known.

Robert Franz was born in Halle, the birthplace of Handel, June 23, 1815. His musical aspirations met with the usual opposition from his parents. He succeeded, finally, in going to Dessau to study composition, but returned in two years, disillusioned by endless dry counterpoint exercises. He spent the rest of his active life as organist, choral director, composer and editor of the works of Bach, Handel and other old masters. He was married in 1843. As early as 1841, his hearing became impaired. By 1863 he was totally deaf. He was then forced to give up all his work, and only through the efforts of such friends as Liszt and Joachim, who gave a series of concerts for his benefit, was he able to carry on until his death in 1892.

An Indefatigable Worker

These facts are unexciting and unimportant. The real biography of Franz is simply this: he wrote nearly three hundred songs. He spent the best years of his life in forming and polishing these until they satisfied him. Sometimes he would keep a song in his portfolio for twenty years before publishing it. Even his exhaustive studies of Bach and Handel were a help to him in developing his *Lieder* style. He could say of his songs — "They are all good." "In them," he told Waldmann, "we must look to find what manner of man he was." That he was an indefatigable worker and a profound student will be obvious to the most casual observer; further, he was endlessly patient, and modest with that serene modesty which knows its power and can wait for recognition. That he had to wait so long was certainly a trial to him, but he knew that his day would come.

AND now, forty-three years after his death, he is still waiting. He has had staunch supporters, but as a rule critics are hesitant to acclaim a composer whose work is confined to song-writing. So Frederick Niecks could say of him — "Although justly numbered with the great song composers, he has not the spontaneity, abundance, power or originality of full-blooded geniuses like Schubert and Schumann. In short, he is a talent rather than a genius, but a rare talent whose creative power was limited, but precious and effective in its limitation." This "limitation" being self-imposed, it hardly seems fair to hold it against him. To judge him by the more familiar and slighter of his songs is certainly unjust. To deny him genius because he chose to perfect a smaller form is pure jumboism — it is like saying that the Radio City Prometheus is greater art than the rarest of cameos. With most critics this pussy-footing should be attributed to timidity and downright ignorance of Franz's output: critics rarely make a study of *Lieder*. Schubert, Schumann and Brahms wrote larger works — therefore their songs can be appraised.

What, then, was his especial contribution to the history of German song? He actually added nothing, but brought together elements which his predecessors had used only instinctively. He was, perhaps, the first great song-writer with rational theories on song-writing. First, his melodies, as has been said, are derived directly from German folk-song. This was because folk-song, like his art-song, attempts to

illustrate musically the words which it sets. "The music," he said, "is the robe with which the poetry clothes itself." If his songs are sometimes modal it is simply because modality was suggested to him by the spirit and inflection of the words.

His Creative Abilities

Franz had a reason for everything he did. If his most intense love-songs often take the form of the old Church Chorales, it is because he found that devotion was best expressed in this way. Second, he developed the art of word-coloring. In this he was akin to Wagner, who by the way, was a warm admirer of Franz, and who applied the same principles in his music dramas. Bach had sensed the possibilities of this art, but whereas his use of it was largely melodic, in Franz we find it in the harmonies. He learned that by underscoring an important word with some particularly poignant chord he could bring out its meaning most effectively. A striking example is his treatment of the word "erschuettert" at the end of *Wie des Mondes Abbild*. Schubert had used this device, notably in the cry of the child in *Der Erlkoenig*, but with Schubert it was merely inspiration — with Franz it was true art. He preferred to set poems in which the meaning was brought out in a pithy final line, and from Schumann he learned how to sum up with an eloquent postlude. Third, with Franz the piano part assumes equal importance with the voice: he wrote no solos with accompaniment. His songs are duets — true vocal chamber music. In this he had, of course, been anticipated by Schumann and some of the ballads of Loewe. In Schubert, songs of this type are the exception rather than the rule.

FINALLY, Franz built up a contrapuntal technique of the highest order, due in large part to his Bach and Handel studies, and this he applied to his piano parts. They have a natural flow, a grace and beauty which makes it a pleasure to play them even without the voice. His harmonies, contrapuntally conceived, are direct and simple, never forced, although frequently striking and always expressive. He was able to perfect his song form by giving up his whole life to the study of it. Schubert, though first and foremost a song-composer, learned his technic (such of it as was "learned" at all) in instrumental writing. Schumann was thoroughly a pianist. Loewe had specialized in dramatic ballads, and though he undoubtedly helped Wagner, Franz was not in sympathy with this type of song. In all his pioneering Franz prepared the way for Hugo Wolf.

Comparison With Other Composers

Let us see by actual comparison how Franz's method differs from that of other composers. Beethoven, though he wrote a number of beautiful Lieder, is admittedly not one of the great song-composers. His utter disregard of the limitations of the human voice is well known. Further, he did not have a real understanding of the genius of language. This is what Franz meant when he made the (to Krehbiel) "incomprehensible statement" that he would rather hear *Adelaide* played on a clarinet than sung by a voice. Compare the settings of these two men of Goethe's *Wonne der Wehmuth*. Beethoven's is florid and melodious. It makes little attempt to convey either the inflection or the inner meaning of the poem; it might easily be the slow movement of a violin sonata. The song is pure Beethoven — absolute music, and nothing more. In Franz the pulsating repeated chords of the accompaniment and the luxuriant sweep of the melody are, one feels, as much by Goethe as by Franz. Where Beethoven drags his song out with meaningless formal extensions, Franz simply sings the words through once, without repetition, and expresses more in the last two measures (on the word "Liebe") than Beethoven does in his entire song.

THE case of Schubert is different: he had a natural gift of song and probably the most spontaneous musical genius the world has ever known. He wrote at white heat, and did very little polishing. He was not always very discriminating in his choice of texts, and many of his songs might better have never seen the light of day. His Heine Lieder belong to his last period, and were published after his death. *Die Stadt* is certainly a masterpiece of its kind. The declamation is broad and true.

The stage is set with a figure in the accompaniment descriptive of the splashing of water and the movement of a boat. There is a deep sense of the twilight stillness suggested in the poem.

IT has often been charged that Franz lacked the dramatic instinct. If we turn now to his setting of this same poem (called *Am fernen Horizonte* after its first line) we will see the utter falsity of this criticism. He gains his effects, it is true, by purely lyrical means, but his song is certainly not less powerful than Schubert's. He has written a simple *arioso*, built on a single motif. There is no introduction, no scene painting — only a translation into music of Heine's words. The climax is one of the most devastating in all music. Ambros called Franz a *Stimmungsliriker* (mood-poet) and Schubert a *Situationsliriker* (descriptive-poet). He might have been thinking of these two songs. Naturally, neither Schubert nor Franz was so circumscribed as the description implies.

Another favorite Heine setting is Schumann's *Die Lotosblume*. It is a rich and beautiful melody — one of the finest Schumann wrote — and the words flow happily with the music. The piano part is nothing more than a succession of repeated chords, with a lovely modulation at the passage which tells of the moon-rise. The final line is a gem. There is a calm about the whole song — something of the true meaning of the word classic. It hardly seems possible for another setting of this poem to exist — until we know the one by Franz. After all Schumann has given us little more than a very beautiful melody. Franz, without using the descriptive devices of Schubert, has painted a graphic picture. The trembling of the flower is portrayed in the triplet accompaniment. There is a wonderful descending scale in the voice part, where Heine speaks of her waiting with drooping head. The piano, in the next line, gives us not only the rise of the moon, but the shimmering of waves as well. The whole meaning of the word *Liebesweh* — the keynote of the poem — is brought out in the last three measures. And with all this the song is as purely lyrical as Schumann's.

The Perfect Accompanist

One of the loveliest of Brahms' *Lieder* is his *Ruhe Suessliebchen*. The words are from the *Magelone* of Tieck. It is a lullaby sung by a lover to his mistress. Brahms' music is redolent of soft breezes and fragrant fields. The melody is broad and voluptuous, rising to passionate heights at the words *ewig bin ich dein*, and subsiding at the end into calm repose. The accompaniment is in flowing six-eight syncopation, breaking into arpeggios in the last verse. It is all typically Brahmsian — in every note we feel the personality of the composer. Anyone at all familiar with his symphonies or chamber music (even excluding the *G Major Violin Sonata* which is suggested in the postlude) would recognize him in this song — as indeed in nearly every song he wrote.

WE cannot say that the Franz setting titled *Schlummerlied* — of this same poem is more beautiful. That he succeeds by simpler means in conveying the essence of the poem cannot be denied. His song is certainly more vocal. The melody is more confined — less exuberant. Both require great reserve and softness of voice, which few singers are able to bring to the wide skips and register changes of Brahms. The declamation in both songs is excellent, and the differences of emphasis make an interesting study. Brahms presents a young and impetuous lover, ready to move Heaven and Earth for his lady. Franz gives us a calmer man, whose love is, in our estimation, certainly much deeper and more enduring. The Franz setting is in varied strophic form, with delightful changes in the accompaniment of the last verse. Throughout the *Lied* the atmosphere of peace is unbroken, and each stanza ends with a "dying fall" in the piano part. Through all the felicities of this song — far too numerous to mention in detail — one feels that it is the poet speaking, but speaking a language more eloquent than words. We think of Franz as of a perfect accompanist, who, after "making" a recital for a singer, quietly slips out and lets the prima donna take the applause.

(Continued on Page 45)

On the Playing of Beethoven's Violin Music

Some Notes and a Review

By WILLIAM KOZLENKO

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in E Flat Major*, Op. 12, No. 3, for Violin and Piano, played by Adolph Busch (Violin), and Rudolf Serkin (Piano). Two Victor discs, Nos. 7560-61, price \$4.00.

What is the essential tone-quality, the *timbre*, as it were, required of a violinist when playing the Violin Sonatas by Beethoven? This question, put baldly, may seem curious to the initiate, but it is, I feel, a valid and pertinent one. Interpretations, of course, differ. No two violinists will substantially play the same Sonata alike. A Kreisler, for example, will discover things in one sonata that another violinist may overlook. Conversely, another violinist may emphasize certain elements that a Busch or a Heifetz may consider relatively unimportant. This process of selection, of emphasis, of phrasing, of being able to evoke differently colored nuances, falls within the category of interpretation; and interpretation is intrinsically a part of personality. Hence the problem which is being advanced at this moment is not one of differences of interpretation, but, rather, the effort to discover an external mean which is closely related to the essential style of Beethoven's violin music.

If a hearer, for example, is apt to say that Busch's violin tone in this work is a trifle heavy, a little too rigid — which it certainly is — we must remember that the tone quality, the essence, as it were, of Beethoven's musical style is hard and tough also. This explanation does not attempt to justify "hardness" of playing by a violinist; it simply wants to show that the "hardness" is not external or unrelated to the inner-character of the music itself. There is a certain element of tenacity in Beethoven's music; and, though the style is not adamant, neither is it resilient, like, for instance, the violin styles of Brahms, Schumann, Franck, and Tschai-

kowsky. The music of these composers, to varying degrees, naturally, lends itself to the persuasion of prismatic moods, to graceful and tractable changes, because the very essence, the inner nature, both of form and content, invite such temperamental whimsicalities.

But not the music of Beethoven or, for that matter, Bach. Here is tightness of design, cohesion of form, stoutness of emotion, toughness of character and concision of style; and a player, ordinarily, yielding to the frequent impulse of his temperament to run away with him in other and more fluid works, must of necessity hold himself back in the music of Beethoven. This restraint is as apparent in his Symphonies and Quartets as it is in his Sonatas and concertos. Consequently, the executant cannot change or alter the inner-character, the essential style to suit his temperamental moods; but he must conform, and conform rigidly, to the concise patterns of the master's music. (This may help explain why a conductor like Toscanini, for example, is hailed for his accurate readings of Beethoven's Symphonies. He plays Beethoven *exactly* as he should be played, and not like Stokowski or Koussevitzky, who unconsciously, alter the pattern of Beethoven's music so as to inject something of themselves into their readings.) To do this requires a disciplined temperament, one that is tenacious and elastic itself. In short, the musician must adhere faithfully to the strict and uncompromising style of Beethoven's music; a style which may be considered classical, cohesive and concrete.

Before we go any further it is important to remember that there is a marked difference between hardness which is static and unemotional, and hardness which is dynamic and emotional. The former is a quantity without feeling, and without the potentiality of emotion. The second, how-

ever, is part of a strong and resolute personality, manifesting itself in strength of character, in forcefulness of will, in vigorous and pithy expression. It is the sublimation of these potent characteristics into tone that we frequently confuse for coldness, dryness, over-stressed logic and hyper-dynamism. This *toughness*, this *elasticity*, in Beethoven's music is something that is not acquired nor foisted upon him from without; but is innate. To say therefore that this inflexibility, this concision, is unrelated to the cardinal style of his ideas is to deny one of the most fundamental elements in Beethoven's creative personality. For it is this essential character of strength or forcible elasticity which makes his music unique.

It may be interesting to postulate a theory which may help explain, to some degree, the reason for this kind of tenseness in this early Sonata. Beethoven composed the three Sonatas which comprise Opus 12 between the years 1797 and 1799. These works, as will be noted from the dates, are part of his Bonn period still, and they come just before his memorable first concert in Vienna, in 1800. In all the works composed at this time, Beethoven's own instrument — the piano — is dominant. The major portion of chamber music conceived during this period consists of the "Bonn" Piano Quartet, the Trios, Opus 1 and 11, the Violincello Sonatas, Opus 5, and the Violin Sonatas, Opus 12, and all are composed with the important co-operation of the piano. In this sense, perhaps, he may unconsciously have absorbed the intrinsic hardness, the brittle qualities of the piano, and transferred them, again unconsciously, to the violin.

"The problem," observes Harvey Grace in his excellent book on Beethoven, "of catering for two virtuosi, and at the same time of producing a good ensemble and a balance of interest throughout, is not always solved." Grace also tells us that Beethoven was as a rule less happy in this type of work — that is, compositions for a stringed instrument and the piano — than in the Sonatas for piano alone. "Most of the violin Sonatas were written rather hastily for the use of eminent players, and so the element of display had to be considered, even at some cost in musical value,

... with the trios for piano, violin, and violincello, however, we step on to another plane. Here was a medium that from the first proved congenial. The addition of an extra instrument removed much of the virtuosic element that was almost inevitably prominent in the duo-sonatas; and the possibilities in the direction of richness of tone and texture were very largely increased."

Whatever the case may be, this element of tenacity in these double-sonatas is evident, and rather than try to excuse it, or wish it away, it is better to recognize it, and accept it as a positive and unspoiled thing.

* * * *

The fashion in which Busch and Serkin play this Sonata by Beethoven — indeed, as they play sonatas by various masters — reveals their common bond of understanding. Here is logic of workmanship which has already become part of instinct. The ordeal of working out technical difficulties mechanically or cerebrally is, I feel, long past: the task has already resolved itself into a process of emotional interfusion.

Here are two artists who complement each other perfectly. Their rendition of chamber works is beyond cavil, and it is a question, open to debate, as to who of the two is greater. In the performance of chamber music, however, such questions need never arise, for here is a matter not of personal superiority nor of technical supremacy, but of perfect fusion between two different personalities and two diverse aesthetic temperaments. Fortunate, then, is the combination if they understand each other, respect each other's eccentricities and whims, to the end that they emerge into an homogeneous whole.

In this manner, the violinist and pianist are no longer two persons who play different instruments, but, rather, a twain who after years of working together, of growing together, develop into a team which succeeds in producing music of high interpretative standards.

It would therefore be redundant to mention that they have done an excellent job with this Sonata, showing good taste, thoughtfulness, and feeling in their performance.



The Kolisch String Quartet

and their First American Record Release

SCHUBERT: *String Quartet in G Major, Opus 161*; played by the Kolisch String Quartet. Columbia Set No. 215, four discs, price \$6.00.

"The outstanding event, from the standpoint of musical news, of the Library of Congress Festival of Chamber Music," sponsored by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, in April, was — according to Olin Downes, the music critic of The New York Times — "the triumphant American debut of the Kolisch String Quartet of Vienna." There is no question that this organization walked away with the "honors of the show." For their rare musicianship, their miraculous percision and the "warmth and vividness of their playing" assuredly glorified the music that they performed.

From Europe for some time past, encomiastic reports regarding this quartet have been reaching our shores; so it was

not surprising to find assembled in Washington, on the morning of April 3th, a representative group of American music critics. That many of them were skeptical of the Kolisch's true ability, there is no question of a doubt; for, as Mr. Downes pointed out, "European standards of performance" are not necessarily ours, and "emasculated reviews" can and do "come by cable from overseas."

The reports about the Kolisch Quartet however, were not exaggerated ones. For so splendidly does this ensemble realize the performance of each and every work which they play, that adjectives quite fail the best reviewer. To sum up their artistry briefly: it is marked by superb virtuosity, an uncanny flexibility and a fine sentiment glow. An outstanding feature of their playing is the fact that they perform without notes, entirely by memory. The concentration and intense study that this requires can only be conjectured, for the

aesthetic and technical differences of works of this kind are unquestionably manifold. In any event, however, it must be both a lengthy and exacting task. It is quite evident that this playing from memory with the Kolisch organization is not merely a feat nor an end, but instead a means, a facility, as Mr. Downes has pertinently remarked, "for confident and spirited interpretation."

The set-up of the Kolisch Quartet is a unique and interesting one. Contrary to tradition, the leader, being a left-handed player, seats himself on the right.

The present recording, the first of the Kolisch Quartet to be issued in this country, provides the American music-lover with a fine example of their artistry in a permanent form. As a recording, this set leaves little to be desired in tonal quality or balance.

The purist decries music written for one combination of instruments being re-arranged for another. As splendid and veracious as Weingartner's arrangement of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata* seems to some of us, there are many who disclaim its right to exist — let alone be heard. Regardless of incurring the purist's wrath, we make the bold suggestion that Schubert's *Quartet in G* might profit by an orchestral arrangement. For despite its verity of form in part, again and again it approaches symphonic proportions which the string quartet cannot adequately reproduce.

Schubert wrote his dramatic *G Major Quartet* in precisely ten days — apparently at "white heat" and in a restless and nervous state. This was in 1826, two years prior to his untimely death. It seems almost incredible that this truly inspired composition, so boldly harmonic and so richly melodic, was never performed during the composer's lifetime; nor for that matter until nearly three decades later. One wonders, had Schubert lived whether he might not have discovered the symphonic proportions of this work and altered its instrumentation himself. The quartet suffers in part from an excessive amount of tremolo: an effect which is better reproduced by a large body of strings. Particularly is this true in the first movement.

Beethoven's influence is traceable in the *Scherzo*. Its *Trio* is one of Schubert's most inspired moments. In the present recording, the Kolisch Quartet do not replay the *Scherzo* after the *Trio*, undoubtedly because the recording was planned for four discs. The effect is of course not what the composer wanted, and yet — there is a quality of beauty about this *Trio* which is left undisturbed when played in this manner. But of course the veritably feverish speed of the finale quickly upsets this. It has been said that this movement overweights the quartet. Perhaps this is true, but at the same time one cannot deny the effectiveness of its "resistless impetuosity" — when played as it is here.

—P. H. R.

"Mendelssohn had been playing in 1831 in Milan at the house of Frau von Ertmann, the intimate friend of Beethoven. He had played her own special sonata, Op. 101 (dedicated to her), and a lot more Beethoven beside, when a little shy Austrian official who had been sitting in a corner came up to him and said timidly: 'Won't you play something of my dear father's?'"

"Who was your father?" said Mendelssohn.

"Mozart," said the little man, and Mendelssohn played Mozart for the rest of the evening."

From Charles Villiers Stanford
By Harry Plunket Greene.

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"Last summer the present writer stood in the gangway of a concert-room just before the show began. He saw Mr. Bernard Shaw approaching on his way to a seat near the platform.

"Taking a deep breath, he said when the two were abreast:

"Mr. Shaw, I've often wished I could say to you that I've learnt more about certain aspects of music from your 'Music in London' than from any other writings about music."

"So you ought," said Mr. Shaw. "What do you expect?"

Sidney Grew in The British Musician and Musical News

A Note On d'Indy

1851 - 1931

BY PETER HUGH REED

VINCENT D'INDY, who died in 1931, was one of France's most distinguished composers. An aristocrat, a logician and a great stylist, his music has often been termed more cerebral than emotional.

Although it is true d'Indy eschewed superficial decoration in his music, and was often over-conscientious in his working-out of form, this does not necessarily mean that he was unemotional. Romain Rolland aptly classified him over a decade ago, as "one of the master-musicians of modern Europe as regards dramatic expression, orchestral color, and science of style." Most critics today concur with that statement. Now "dramatic expression" and "orchestral color" are both emotional characteristics; so it will be noted this derogation against him is without foundation.

Early Influences

D'Indy was strongly influenced by Wagner and Franck, as were a great many other composers of his period. But this "influence" was not in any way mere imitation. His own personality is unmistakable in all his compositions. Even in his earliest works, like *Le Chant de la Cloche*, *Fervaal* and *Wallenstein*, where this influence is most noticeable, his creative melos dominates. The sensuous mysticism of Franck and the excessive emotionalism of Wagner do not invade his music. His emotionalism is of a less personal genre, of a more solemn order.

D'Indy has been quoted as saying — "there is in art, truly, nothing but the heart than can produce beauty."

Daniel Gregory Mason, in his illuminating essay on the composer in his *Contemporary Composers*, tells us that "it is his heart that guides his mind through the masses of its knowledge; it is his luminous sincerity that shines through all he wrote, however complex it may be in de-

tail; both the warmth and the light of his music came from his emotion. Responsive emotion in the listener, accordingly, is the key to the intricacies of his style."

The vitality and flexibility of d'Indy's rhythms are one of his chief characteristics. He was not, as Mr. Mason tells us, a believer in "mechanical balancing of equal sections of melody, cut off so to speak with a yardstick." His phrases vary in length and their expressions are modified by rhythmic as well as harmonic devices. He was a lover of the beautiful; and evidently with Homer believed that beauty "was a glorious gift of Nature." For much of his most essential music owed its inspiration to the great outer world.

His Birth Place

Born in the Cévennes, a mountainous section of southeastern France, he found his greatest happiness and inspiration in his native country. From the windows of his chateau near Boffes, he was able to view the snowy summits of the distant Alps, the broad plain of the Rhone, and the pine wooded slopes of the lesser Cévennes. It was there, "after the labors and vexations of a winter" spent in teaching in Paris, that he loved to return. For in that elevating mountain country, he found "true repose," and felt, as he once said, that he was "at the true source of all art."

Here in 1886, at the age of thirty-five, he wrote his *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*, often called his *Symphonie Cévenole*, a work which has been termed of importance in the evolution of the symphony in modern times.

And here nineteen years later, he wrote his great masterpiece *Summer Day On a Mountain*, a work which incited one critic to acclaim him as the "noblest Nature-poet of them all."

This composition "is not only his masterpiece," says Lawrence Gilman, "it is the man himself — a precipitation of his own soul." For "in this serene and lovely work, the mountains have, for the first time in music, been adequately celebrated." And, it is "worthy of Wordsworth at his best; for it has an equal aspiration, and equal reverence, an equal raptness and nobility, and it has, besides, an intensity of expression, a distinction of style, which Wordsworth came upon only in rare moments."

A Youthful Work

The *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*, which Columbia issued on records last month, is less subjective than the *Summer Day On a Mountain*. The contemplative poet, the true religious mystic of the latter work does not manifest himself in this one. It is a song of youth, physically exhilarated by the heights — a song of youth elevated, thrilled by the great open spaces, by the pine trees swaying in the wind, and the bright sunlight on the green slopes. It is music filled with the vibrancy of Nature in the daylight hours, of the ecstasy of high places. It is music rhythmically alive, pulsating with the fervor and the sheer joy of living. The theme, taken from a folk-song of the Cévennes, is a bright tune — with an underlying plaintive note — which d'Indy makes the most of.

The scoring of this work is most effective. It conclusively proves that d'Indy early earned his right of recognition as one of the greatest masters of the resources of the orchestra. His use of the piano, incidentally, as a department in the orchestra is a distinctive and most expressive feature.

A Short Analysis

In the beginning, the theme is given out by the English horn. There is, as one writer has said, an affectionate curve to it. The rhythm is triple throughout the first movement, with subtle inner variations of three against two. The music has a swing to it, a healthy animation, and a youthful verve.

The second movement alternates between a three and two-four rhythm. Here the music "seems to parallel the wonder of the high places," as W. R. Anderson said in *The Gramophone*. One feels that the

composer has climbed to an eminence, and turned to admire the wide panorama of Nature that opens out below him.

The animation of youth abounds in the last movement. We are climbing again. The pace of the music reflects the elation, the effervescence of the climber. The rhythm alternates between two-four and six-eight, with a march-like gait. This is purely emotional music, filled with the energy, the elation and the joy of youth.

D'Indy, like his teacher, Franck, and like Chausson, of whom we have spoken elsewhere in a review, was fond of the "cyclical" form or recurring theme in more than one movement; and was, in fact, more resourceful than they, in his employment of this form. His *Symphony On a French Mountain Air* is of course "cyclical" in form, and the rhythmical transformations, of the tune upon which the work is founded, in the various movements displays his ingenuity in his handling of the form.

"May we have some more of d'Indy," as our English colleague, W. R. Anderson, remarked recently, the *Summer Day On a Mountain*, for example, and his notable *Second Symphony in B Flat*. And, if it is not asking too much, his *Second String Quartet*, which was once available in an acoustic recording.

"That Praise That Stimulates"

To the Editor,

Dear Mr. Reed:—

May I add a word of praise to you for the splendid piece of work you and your associates have accomplished in the compiling and printing of the new American Music Lover.

It isn't so much that such a publication is needed — but rather the high degree of authenticity of your articles that makes it a necessity. I think you are wise to include the more modern and popular music. Your reviews on recorded music are most outstanding. Surely such a publication will enjoy great success. I compliment you on a worthy contribution to the field of musical literature.

Sincerely,

MYLES A. DRISSKELL.

Associate, Teachers College,
Columbia University, N. Y. City.

(Continued from Page 38)

It remains to show in what ways Franz anticipated Wolf. Wolf is said to have had little regard for the work of his predecessor, because, as we have seen, he created nothing new, but went back into the past to find his technique. Wolf's approach, however, was so similar to Franz's, that it seems incredible that he did not study the older man's songs. Perhaps the fact that they both gave their lives to this one specialized field led them to the same conclusions. Franz, because of his folk-song tendencies, made frequent use of the strophic form. In folk-song, the declamation of the first stanza is usually true and telling. The later words are made to fit the same tune as best they can. Franz, in adhering generally to this formula was occasionally forced to sacrifice his declamation, though, as we have seen, he obtained many of his most striking effects by slight melodic and harmonic changes in repetition. Wolf, a less simple soul, insisted upon declamatory truth. Thus he drifted further from the folk-song.

WOLF established a melos of his own, somewhat akin to Wagner, but distinctly individual. The strophic form drops out of his scheme of things, although a variation of it appears occasionally in such songs as the Eichendorf *Heimweh*. Simple three-part song form, as in *Verborgenheit*, is exceptional, though he often manages to imply a three-part form. Franz, then, fitted his Lieder to a form, but Wolf made his own forms to fit his poems. His harmonic palette is the richer by the years that passed between the careers of the two men. Though the technic displayed in his piano parts is seemingly endless, it is less polished than that of Franz. Like Franz he was careful in his selection of poems. Again like Franz his settings are so sensitive that it is impossible to pick out his best songs simply by reading the words. As poetry is heightened speech, so song is intensified poetry. The perfect song is the one in which poetry and music are so fused as to become inseparable. Franz and Wolf both worked to this end but approached it from different angles. Franz was, after all, a musical classicist, and he sometimes gave preference to the music. Wolf never sacrificed his poet, and such was his genius that he rarely disturbed the perfect balance. We must remember that Franz was a pioneer — a radical, he called himself — and that his theories were new when he conceived them.

On the Singing of Franz

Why, then, is Franz so neglected? Why are beginners in the vocal studios allowed to cut their eye-teeth on such songs as *Widmung*, *Bitte*, *Aus meinen grossen Schmerzen*, *Es hat die Rose sich beklagt*, *Gute Nacht*, or *Er ist gekommen*, and then allowed to forget his existence? Why do not established singers sing these songs, and investigate others which are totally unknown? Why do not even Lieder specialists know the bulk of the Franz songs? It is because his Lieder are too simple and not grateful enough. Their simplicity, as we have seen, is on the surface. That they do not display a singer's voice is only a reflection on that singer. They do display everything else he has, and if he has nothing else, he had better avoid them. Of course he must share the glory with the accompanist, and this is too much for most vocalists. Occasionally a famous singer does do a group of Franz, and we have never seen them coldly received. Who that has heard Matzenauer sing *Wonne der Wehmuth* or Hempel *Er ist gekommen* can ever forget the experience? Certainly Franz can be a popular composer. The public may never appreciate his subtlety, but it can love his melodies.

There are two ways of spreading propaganda. One is giving Franz albums to everyone who can play the piano at all passably. The other is by the phonograph—or would be if there were any good Franz recordings. In a search through many catalogs, old and new, I have been able to find only ten records of nine songs. There are exactly two listed in the current domestic catalogs, and neither is worthy of the song. Perhaps it is too much to hope for a Franz Society, but a Lieder Society might be a possibility. If so Franz should be given first place, because he is the most sadly neglected composer on the list.

Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this issue: LAWRENCE ABBOTT, A. P. DE WEESE, PAUL GIRARD,
WILLIAM KOZLENKO, PHILIP MILLER, PETER HUGH REED

ORCHESTRAL

BACH: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, in F Major*; played by the Ecole Normale Chamber Orchestra, direction Alfred Cortot. Two Victor discs, Nos. 11781-82, price \$3.00.

Bach's *First Brandenburg Concerto* is perhaps the least convincing of the six. It requires agile treatment to keep it from seeming interminable. Fortunately, Cortot's Gallic temperament permits him to recognize this necessity, with the result that his reading is vivaciously alive. The impassioned character of the slow movement is always enjoyable in repetition, and the last movement is ever an exhilarating tonic. As we said in our recent article on the concertos (*The Six Jolly Companions*), "it skips along merrily, almost jocosely, veritably making one want to dance with it." The balance of the recording here is very fine.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

BALAKIREFF: *Thamar*, Symphonic Poem for Orchestra, played by the Orchestra of the Paris Conservatory, direction Piero Coppola. Two Victor discs, Nos. 11349-50. Price \$3.00.

Balakireff, as a musical personality, stands out as one of the most curious in history. Here was a musician who was entirely self taught, but whose musical genius was of such high order that his best work, though limited in quantity, is generally conceded to be as solid and technically integrated as that of any school-trained composer. It was through his untiring efforts, his vision, his enthusiasm and emotional drive that he succeeded in establishing a national school of music, the like of which the musical world has not seen since. He started the group known

as "The Great Five" which consisted of himself, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Borodin, Moussorgsky and Cui — an insignificant luminary in comparison to the others — as members. Balakireff was commonly and unselfishly accepted as their superior, and though he was of the same age as they, each looked up to him for counsel and advice. At the very height of his career he ceased writing music, developed a religious fixation, and retired from active musical life.

Glinka recognized Balakireff to be the man who would carry on the tradition of Russian musical nationalism, which he had inaugurated in his great opera, "The Life of the Tsar". And *Thamar* fulfills this tradition.

Dostoevsky once remarked that all Russian novelists had emerged from out of "The Cloak" by Gogol, and it is equally true, as Cecil Gray writes, "that most subsequent Russian composers have at some time or another lain in the couch of the voluptuous and terrible Queen Thamar, and fallen victims to her witchery and fatal fascination."

It took a long time before *Thamar* appeared; so long, in fact, that its many unique ideas were borrowed by Rimsky-Korsakoff, who incorporated them into his *Scheherazade*. Anyone who is not familiar with the exact details, upon hearing *Thamar* for the first time, might accuse Balakireff of stealing these ideas from Rimsky-Korsakoff, whereas the opposite is true. This work foreshadows all the tricks and rhythmical devices used by Russian composers in order to achieve Oriental or Tartar effects in their music. *Thamar* is dedicated to Liszt, who was a rabid admirer of Balakireff's rich artistry; and it is one of the best musical fulfillments of Liszt's ideas of program-music.

Thamar is a tonal painting of sumptuous and multi-colored hues. In fact, it is more. It may be likened to a national saga, to a brilliant chapter from the Arabian Nights. For sheer rhythmic power, for unbridled emotion and melodic splendour, its only equals are the Polovetzian Dances from *Prince Igor* by Borodin. Yet *Thamar* stands alone in its field. It is so Russian in character, so indigenous in mood that one would be inclined to feel its composer had never heard any other music but that of his own native land, and even that of a quality not usually heard in the metropolitan cities but rather in the forsaken wilds of vast Russia. It may not be rich in harmonic invention, but there are enough rhythmic and melodic variety in it to satisfy the most dogmatic listener.

Coppola's performance of this work is sensitive and well done; and although a Frenchman, he nevertheless catches the wild spirit, the barbaric sweep of Circassian rhythms, and, for a while at least, converts the dignified orchestra, (picture its members in full-dress suits!) into a band of mad Tartar musicians.

—W. K.

* * * *

BERLIOZ: *The Corsair Overture*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia disc No. 68287-D, price \$1.50.

Today the music of Hector Berlioz is seldom played. He appears to be one of those composers who is slated for obscurity. Yet he does not deserve this fate. His music may be uneven in excellence; he may lack the stature of a Bach or a Beethoven; but his music bears the stamp of his own unusual personality, and contains many passages that are highly effective and stimulating in musical thought. Moreover, we find in Berlioz the first hints of the musical styles of Liszt, Wagner and Strauss. For these reasons it is encouraging to have another opportunity to explore the music of Berlioz — especially when it is given as outstanding a performance as this overture receives under the baton of Sir Hamilton Harty.

The Corsair is one of the least known of the orchestral works of Berlioz. The composer does not mention it even once in his Memoirs. Its title refers to the Byron

poem which deals with daring cruises, raging pirates and bloody orgies — truly a fit subject for Berlioz's imagination. The music, we find, is not so blustering as its title suggests. It has virility and imagination, but we cannot quite agree with Hans von Bulow, who spoke of it as going as if "it were shot from a pistol," or with the Vienna press of 1882, which described it as "transparent, illuminated, like a stereoscopic picture." Yet it is undeniably brilliant, facile writing. The real honors of this record must go to Sir Hamilton Harty and the members of the London Philharmonic, who have put elasticity into unbending music.

—L. A.

* * * *

CHAUSSON: *Symphony in B Flat Major, Opus 20*; played by Paris Conservatory Orchestra, direction Piero Coppola. Victor Set No. M261, three discs, price \$6.50.

In our estimation, this is a most important recording. One that should have been issued long before this, for Chausson's symphony is a fine work — a more communicative one, for example, than is the symphony by his celebrated teacher — César Franck. As a matter of fact, it hangs together much better than Franck's work; and, as the reviewer in *The Gramophone* recently observed, its orchestration is "extraordinarily sure and effective, and far removed from the organ-like methods of Franck."

It seems almost incongruous that Chausson's symphony has not established itself in the concert-goers' esteem in a manner comparable to that of Franck's. It is not that the two works are necessarily related, although the essential characteristics of both are purely subjective, but the fact that both similarly are emotionally eloquent and exalted.

Chausson met an unfortunate and untimely death in his early forties: at that precise point, when — if we are to agree with the popular contemporary philosopher, Professor Pitkin — life most earnestly begins. Certainly when one makes a study of Chausson's music and observes the self-confidence and technical development manifested in his later music, for example in his quartet for piano and

strings (Opus 30), written a year and a half before his death, one feels that had he lived to be as old, say, as his teacher, César Franck, he might have created works which would have placed him for all time in the front ranks of French composers.

As it is, Chausson's symphony ranks very high among French symphonic works. When it was created in 1890, it was — despite its technical unevenness — a distinct achievement for its time. Even today, its eloquence and emotional spontaneity override — as one writer has said — all "attempts at critical inuendo." For the nobility of its sentiment, the full-throated expansiveness of its melody and its fervor claim admiration and respect.

Although the influence of Wagner and Franck are apparent in this music — this in no way detracts from its originality or its vitality. Like Franck, Chausson has used the so-called "cyclic" form; and the opening tune, which is of considerable length, gives rise to practically all of the material used in the work.

Chausson's music is the music of a dreamer — a dreamer who would seem to have dwelt in unfrequented or lonely places of Nature. As one of his countrymen has said — it is "full of murmurs, of the swaying of branches, of bright flowers . . . full of the freshness and of life, of nature, and of calls uttered through foliage whose shady density opens at times in the path of a warm ray . . ." In the first movement particularly — and also in the last movement — his use of the oboe, that subjective singer of Nature's enchantment, is most ingenious and expressive. In the second movement, his scoring for English horn and cello establishes an effective pastoral quality to the music.

Like Franck's symphony, Chausson's is in three movements. It opens with a sombre introduction, somewhat Wagnerian in character, but with the start of the movement proper (about halfway through the first record face), Chausson is speaking for himself both brilliantly and fervently. The movement builds impressively. The slow movement, marked *Très lent*, one writer states — "wears the aspect of a funeral march," but we feel here more of the melancholic dreamer in Nature than the funereal singer. The harmonic texture

of this section is rich. The poetic beauty of the second subject (beginning of the fifth record face) — already mentioned above — is most impressive; and the end of the movement is truly exalted. In the final section, the composer sings with animation. The music accumulates with dramatic power and renewed fervor, but toward the close, it changes to a meditative character and ends in a serene mood.

Piero Coppola gives us a fine performance of this work, and the recording — although not on a par with the new American ones — is most satisfying.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

HARRIS: *When Johnny Comes Marching Home. Overture*; played by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy, Victor disc, No. 3629, price \$2.00.

It is impossible to assume a patronizing attitude toward Roy Harris' music. He is too vital a personality and his expressions in tonal art are too true to his temperament. Harris is modern in spirit only, for his forms are all of classical derivation. The present overture ranks among his most interesting music on records. Like his *Four Minutes and Twenty Seconds*, it was composed especially for a recording company, and like that particular work it possesses a sentient spontaneity unlike any other recorded work of his. His choice of the Civil War tune *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* strikes us as a wise one. It is a good tune, one with which most of us are familiar, and one which lends itself to interesting treatment. The essentiality of this overture may be open to debate, but its vitality in our estimation is certainly beyond cavil.

The fact that Victor commissioned Harris to write this overture especially for a Victor recording may well set a precedent. And if every composer so commissioned turns out anywhere near as vital and interesting a composition, as Harris has, Victor's catalog should certainly contain some important American works. Needless to say, Mr. Ormandy does justice to the music.

—P. H. R.

MENDELSSOHN: *Ruy Blas* — Overture, Op. 95; played by The B. B. C. Symphony Orchestra, direction of Adrain Boult. Victor disc, No. 11791, price \$1.50.

Victor Hugo's drama, *Ruy Blas*, tells a story of the Spanish court. Don Salluste, a noble, whose advances to the Queen have been repulsed, introduces his valet, Ruy Blas, at court. The servant, succeeding where the master had failed, Don Salluste has his revenge by announcing his hoax. This story did not appeal to Mendelssohn the moralist, and with a bad grace, he accepted a commission to write an overture and a romance for a benefit production. He left the overture to the last minute, and barely finished it in time. He called it (to excuse his connection with Hugo's play) an overture not to Ruy Blas, but to the Theatrical Pension Fund. Nor was he proud of his work. Only by diplomacy was he persuaded to allow it to be performed in concert. In view of these facts it seems that those commentators who find the story of the drama outlined

in the overture are wide of the mark. There is, however, no reason to accept Mendelssohn's own opinion. It has considerably more vitality than much of this composer's more righteous music. Neither very profound nor excessively obvious, it is a good example of the old school overture. It has no such unforgettable melody as those which make the *Freischuetz*, *Euryanthe* or the *Third Leonore* Overtures so popular, but it is good music, and deserves a place on light concert and radio programs. Little remains to be said of the fine work of the B. B. C. Orchestra under its distinguished conductor, Dr. Boult. The playing here is up to standard, and the recording is marvelously clear and lifelike.

* * * * * —P. M.

ROSSINI: *La Gazza Ladra*, Overture; played by London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc No. 68301D, price \$1.50.

The overture to Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* or *The Thieving Magpie* alone survives — the opera having past into ob-

New Victor Records

The Music of Johann Strauss.....Eugene Ormandy — Minneapolis
Blue Danube, Tales from the Vienna
Woods, Acceleration Waltzes, Fleder-
maus and Gypsy Baron Overtures

Sonata in A Major (Beethoven)
("Kreutzer")Hephzibah and Yehudi Menuhin

Symphony in B Flat Major
(Chausson)Coppola — Paris Conservatory
Orchestra

Ricercare from "Musical Offering"
(Bach)Edwin Fischer and his Chamber
Orchestra

Parsifal — Symphonic Synthesis
(Act III) (Wagner)Stokowski — Philadelphia Orchestra

Thus Spake Zarathustra (Strauss).....Koussevitzky — Boston Orchestra



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CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

livion. In character, it is very similar to the overture to *The Barber of Seville*, and along with it has long been popular in the concert hall. Such eminent conductors as Toscanini, Beecham and Furtwaengler favor the overtures of Rossini, and frequently include them on their programs. And when such orchestral geniuses interpret them, their gaiety, their sparkling wit, and their "frolicsome melodies" are rarely attested. Beecham's present performance is a truly treasureable one — one which reveals new subtleties of line and rhythm with each re-playing. The recording is excellent.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

STRAUSS, Johann: *Blue Danube Waltz*, *Overture to Die Fledermaus*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, *Acceleration Waltz*, *Overture to the Gypsy Baron*; played by Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy, Victor Set No. M262, five discs, price \$10.00.

Oscar Straus was a composer of waltzes; "My Hero" seems destined to become a classic among operetta melodies. Richard Strauss leaned toward the rhythm of the waltz, even in his more serious moments; he could not resist sprinkling anachronistic three-four rhythms through the score of *Der Rosenkavalier*. But when the words "Strauss" and "Waltz" are mentioned together, we inevitably turn our thoughts to Johann the younger, who well earned the title of Waltz King. The admiration of great composers for his waltzes is well known. Wagner was a devotee. So was Brahms, whose inscription on the fan of Mme. Strauss is a classic: a fragment of *The Blue Danube* followed by the words, "Unfortunately, not by me — Johannes Brahms." Restaurant orchestras in Helsingfors know that whenever Sibelius dines within hearing, they will please him best by playing Strauss waltzes. We can enjoy the spring-like beauty of the music of Johann Jr., knowing that we are in the best of company.

These records are thoroughly delightful examples of Strauss's art. Mr. Ormandy and his distinguished ensemble have given a brilliant and gay interpretation to the music. There may be those who still cher-

ish a fondness for the early-electrical and much-abbreviated recording by the Philadelphia Orchestra of *The Blue Danube* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods*. In comparison with the Stokowski rendition, Eugene Ormandy's reading may not be quite so eurythmic; its motion is less supple; its retards perhaps too deliberate. But the gains offset any loss. Each of these waltzes occupies two full sides instead of one; and not the least examples of Strauss's charm are to be found in his introductions, transitions and perorations. Each of the other three selections has its own separate disc, too, which is a decided convenience.

Even if you are not a whole-hearted devotee of the Vienna waltz, you will find these records stimulating. One minute you will be surprised at the banality of the music, and the next completely disarmed by its fresh, intoxicating beauty. Half way through the *Blue Danube* you will decide that Strauss's orchestration is nothing to write home about and during the overtures you will make quite a few mental reservations against that statement. *Acceleration Waltz*, you will discover, is a beautiful study in contrasts. All in all, you will find surprisingly absent that dullness which usually characterizes "pop concert" material.

Those who are responsible for the records are to be congratulated on the fidelity of the recording.

—L. A.

* * * *

TANSMAN: *Triptyque for String Orchestra*, played by St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, direction Vladimir Golschmann, Columbia Set No. 213, two discs, price \$3.00.

This is interesting music, well played and excellently reproduced. Columbia's new "Wide-range" recording gives us the brightness of the music — the overtones, as we hear them in the concert hall. Even on a machine, which is not equipped to reproduce the so-called "highs", this recording will reveal qualities of string tone unheard from older recordings.

Tansman's *Triptyque* is a work belonging to our own day and age. It is rhythmically vigorous and energetic — restless,

contentious at times, and even mechanistic. The pulse of modern life dominates. The machine asserts its influence. But the voice of the singer is not completely submerged by rhythmic mechanism — for Tansman inherits his Polish ancestors' love of poetic melodies, as his second movement and his third, in part, prove.

The first movement is a veritable transcription of the pulse of modern life —



VLADIMIR GOLSCHMANN

the energy is insistent, dominating and inescapable. The harmonic coloring here is made secondary to the vitality of the music. The second movement is somewhat contemplative. The rhythmic tension is lessened, but the energy of life is still suggested by the composer's technical treatment of his more melodic and poetic material. The last movement is most ingenious. The energy is resumed with renewed insistence, and then interrupted by a poetic interlude of a truly impressive — although dispassionate — character. The finale of the work is an effective rhythmic paeon. In the last movement, the composer's interesting use of harmonics is excellently brought out by the "new" recording.

This is a most welcome release, because it is not only a work out of the general repertoire but a vital contemporary composition. Incidentally, it is the first of a series of recordings which Golschmann and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra are making for Columbia.

—P. H. R.

(Editor's Note: An interesting and informative article on Alexander Tansman by William Kozlenko appeared in the March issue of the *Music Lovers' Guide*. Copies of this magazine can be procured from *The American Music Lover*.)

CONCERTOS

LALO: *Symphonie Espagnole for Violin and Orchestra*, Op. 21; played by Bronislaw Huberman with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Georg Szell. Columbia Set No. 214, three discs, price \$4.50.

One of the surprising things in the history of electrical recording is that this famous war-horse of violin virtuosi should have had to wait so long for inclusion in the catalogs. When it finally found its way into the Victor collection, the first version by Henry Merckel was promptly replaced by another by Yehudi Menuhin. Now Columbia enters the fields with this one by Huberman. The work, more properly a concerto than a symphony, has not been heard so frequently on orchestral programs in recent seasons, but it still figures on recital lists.

Though the fame of Edouard Lalo rests largely on his opera *Le Roi d'Ys* — which, in turn, is chiefly remembered by the well-known *Aubade* for tenor — the *Symphonie Espagnole* is probably his best-loved work. It was first performed by the great Sarasate — to whom it was dedicated — at a Colonne Concert in Paris, February 7, 1875. A brilliant and showy composition, it has since been a favorite with practically all violinists. Hans von Buelow and Tchaikowsky were also numbered among its admirers. Characteristic Spanish rhythms have always had a fascination, and this work is brimming over with them.

The *Symphonic Espagnole* comprises five movements, but Sarasate himself, at the premiere, omitted the third, and the work has rarely been given in its entirety. The Huberman version follows that of Sarasate, including the *Allegro non troppo*, *Scherzando*, *Andante* and *Rondo*. This is virtuoso music, and the connoisseur of violin playing will choose the recording of his favorite artist. Huberman's following will not be disappointed.

—P. M.

LITOLFF: *Scherzo from Concerto Symphonique No. 4*, for piano and orchestra, played by Irene Scharrer and London Symphony Orchestra, direction Sir Henry Wood. Columbia disc, No. 17045M, ten inch, price \$1.00.

Henry Charles Litolf (1818-1891) is best remembered today as the publisher of the "Collection Litolf" — one of the earliest cheap editions of classical music. In his day, however, Litolf was considered a brilliant pianist (he was a pupil of Moscheles) and also a brilliant composer.

In the present recording of his scherzo-section from his *Fourth Symphonic Concerto*, we find his brilliance as a composer set forth. But though this is assuredly effective music, it can not however be termed essential music. The influence of Liszt and Mendelssohn are traceable in this movement. Whether this is true of the other movements or not, we cannot say, as we are unfamiliar with the work in its entirety. Irene Scharrer plays this music excellently. In fact, her performance sustains interest immeasurably. The recording is clear and well balanced.

—P. G.

SALZEDO: *Concerto for Harp and Seven Wind Instruments*; played by Lucile Lawrence and the Barrere Ensemble of Wind Instruments, direction of the composer. Columbia Modern Music Set No. 8, price \$1.50.

There is nothing parallel to this work on records. It is not only unique in its own category, but is probably unmatched in any. For Salzedo is not concerned with harp traditions in this concerto, but in-

stead with exploiting its resources as he has developed them and outlined them in his book *Modern Study of the Harp*. The aural pleasure usually derived from the harp is not exploited here, for Salzedo uses much dissonance and modern harmonic coloring. The music is most ingenious, although lacking in true sentiment impulse. Salzedo has concerned himself mainly with effects, tone colors and abstruse rhythms, all of which are not always comprehensible, largely because this manner of writing for the harp is unfamiliar to most of us.

The concerto is impeccably performed by Lucile Lawrence, the composer's wife, and George Barrere (the flutist) and his Ensemble of Wind Instruments under the direction of Mr. Salzedo. It is in three connected movements, none of which follow traditional concerto forms. The first movement, conversational in style, is marked *Prelude, Cadenza, Allegro vivo*. The second movement is a *Nocturne* and the third movement is made up of four old dance forms — *Menuet, Farandole, Pavane* and *Gaillarde*. If we were to recommend a section for an initial hearing, we would select the last with the *Pavane* and *Gaillarde*, not alone because the composer has realized these forms in a most unique and unusual manner, but because Miss Lawrence's technique is represented here most effectively.

Salzedo is unquestionably one of the foremost living harpists. For this reason, this recording is more than warranted.

Since the concerto takes only five sides in the recording, the sixth side has been wisely selected to represent the composer in a different vein — a charming piece called *Chanson dans la nuit*, in which the interpretive as well as creative artistry of Mr. Salzedo is displayed to advantage.

—P. G.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BACH: *Musical Offering on a Theme of Frederick the Great — Ricercare in Six Voices*, (arr. Fischer), played by Edwin Fischer and his Chamber Orchestra. Victor disc No. 3660, price \$2.00.

The *Musikalisches Opfer* was Bach's homage to Frederick the Great after visit-

It is hardly necessary to urge all Bach lovers to hear this record. As everyone knows, the fact that a Bach work is not familiar is rarely a commentary on its value. Schweitzer finds this *ricercare* tech-

Edwin Fischer is too well-known as an exponent of Bach to need further praise. His string orchestra plays this music with fine feeling and finish. The performance has been well recorded.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in A Major* (Kreutzer), *Opus 47*; played by Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin. Victor Set No. 260, four discs, price \$8.00.

Young Yehudi is the star in this performance, for his artistry has truly matured. It cannot be said of his sister — that her performance rises to anywhere near the heights of her brother's. She is

Highly Praised by Critics in Europe and America

Set 212—	<i>Duet in B Flat Major—Violin and Piano</i>	Goldberg and Hindemith
Set 132—	<i>Concertante Sinfonie—Violin, Viola and Orchestra</i>	Sammons, Tertis, Harty and Orchestra
Set 194—	<i>"Jupiter" Symphony</i>	Beecham and London Phil. Orch.
Set 124—	<i>Quintet in A, Clarinet and Strings</i>	Chas. Draper and Léner Quartet
Set 144—	<i>Quartet in G</i>	Léner String Quartet
Set 207—	<i>Divertimento, No. 17 in D</i>	Harty and London Phil. Orch.

Set 191—HARRIS—*Symphony* 1933.....Koussevitzky and Boston Symphony
Set 209—HINDEMITH—*Trio for Strings No. 2* (1933).....Hindemith Trio
Set 162—STRAVINSKY—*Symphonie des Psaumes*.....Straram Orch., Vlassoff
Chorus, dir. Composer

68094-5D—MILHAUD—*La Creation du Monde*.....Symphony Orch., dir. Composer

NEW YORK CITY



very talented, however, and her playing has a fine singing quality.

The *Kreutzer* is fundamentally a virtuoso piece: hence brilliance rather than profundity is its chief characteristic. Menuhin's aesthetic sense permits him, however, to feel and convey the expressive moments of the work most effectively. He is never over-concerned with technique, although his technique is at all times clean and certain.

The recording is good, but the balance is not perfect: which is perhaps due to Miss Hepzibah's lesser familiarity with recording.

—P. G.

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DITTERSDORF: *Quartet No. 1 in D Major* — *Finale* — *Allegro*; and SCHUBERT: *Minuet* — *Transcription from Sonata in G, Op. 78*; played by Lener String Quartet. Columbia ten-inch disc, No. 17024-D, price \$1.00.

This strange combination comes as a surprise from the Lener Quartet. Releases of single movements from string quartets have been so infrequent since the advent of electrical recording that the idea today seems decidedly novel. The Schubert selection is not from a quartet at all, but an arrangement of a movement from a piano sonata — which is even more unusual. It must be admitted that the music does not come off badly in its new form, though why it was done in preference to a real quartet movement remains a question. The other side is more important, and on its own musical merits quite delightful. Karl Dittersdorf, a famous contemporary of Haydn, had the misfortune to be eclipsed by some greater genius in every field of his endeavor. He was a prolific composer of opera, oratorio, symphonies and chamber music, and in each genre he won real distinction. But Haydn also wrote symphonies, oratorios and chamber music; and sparkling and witty as were the operas of Dittersdorf, they had to stand comparison with those of Gretry. For this reason, and not for lack of merit, he has been forgotten. His quartets are, however, played from time to time by our

leading organizations, and it seems strange that so far only one of them (in E flat, played by the Deman Quartet for Polydor) and an occasional movement should have found their way to the recording studios. This little sample leaves us wanting more. The Leners play in their accustomed smooth manner, and the recording leaves little to be desired.

—P. M.

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FRANCK: *Quartet in D Major* eleven sides; and SCHUBERT: *Quartet in E Flat Major* — *Finale-Allegro, Op. 125, No. 1*, one side, played by Pro Arte Quartet. Victor Set M-259, six discs, price \$12.00.

The *Quartet in D Major* was César Franck's last chamber work. It was first performed by members of the Société Nationale in the Salle Pleyel, Paris, April 19, 1890. This occasion was Franck's first real triumph. So great was the applause that the composer could not believe that it was intended for him — giving the credit rather to the members of the quartet. The next day he remarked to some of his pupils that at last the public was beginning to understand him. His life had been passed in the comparative obscurity of his organ loft — he was recognized as a great organist, but as a composer he had hardly made a mark. Perhaps his own modesty and the rather unreasoning devotion of many of his pupils had set the public against him. It is difficult to understand why this public could not digest his works. He was not an abstruse composer (though as this quartet proves, he could set and solve technical difficulties with the best); in fact he sometimes erred on the side of obviousness. His chief fault was a lack of self-criticism which allowed him, at times, to be long-winded, repetitious, and on occasion, cheap. His importance as the father of the modern French school (nearly all the prominent figures who followed him were his pupils) as well as a composer of real genius cannot, however, be over-emphasized.

Students of analysis will find this quartet a happy hunting ground. The first

movement has a structure unique in music; instead of developing two contrasting themes, Franck has pitted two whole sections against each other. The first section, called the lied-form, has an eloquent and lofty theme; the second, called sonata-form, is restless and agitated. Interesting as are the technical features of this movement, it is important chiefly as inspired music. The scherzo reminds us of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, but is nevertheless original and quite unique writing for Franck. The *larghetto* theme is sheer loveliness. The finale, we feel, is the weak spot. Franck here uses his favorite device of rehashing themes that have been fully developed before. The first and third movements both being on the long side, we feel that it is a bit too much to have their themes brought back in this way. There is so much real beauty in the work that it seems a shame not to end it leaving us wanting more. Some will find the *Quartet* perhaps too reminiscent of the *Symphony* and the *Violin Sonata*, but surely any lover of modern French music will admire its transparent texture, and the skill with which it has been written.

It goes without saying that the Pro Arte have the proper sympathy and understanding for the interpretation of the work of their compatriot. The balance of the ensemble is nearly as perfect as that of the composition. Only occasionally does the viola come out a trifle too strongly — a fault possibly attributable to the position of the microphone in recording. The fastidious may find that the first violinist lacks the perfect legato which makes the playing of the 'cellist so notable — but all these are minor blemishes on an otherwise outstanding performance. To complete the record, there are a couple of places in which the playing does not agree with the printed score, but this will bother only those who follow with the notes. Perhaps there is some authority for the change.

The charming Schubert movement which is used for a filler is done with the proper delicacy and grace. As music it is in sharp and delightful contrast to the Franck.

—P. M.

STRAVINSKY: *Ragtime for Eleven Instruments*, directed by the Composer, and *Piano-Rag Music*, piano solo, played by the Composer. Columbia disc No. 68300D, price \$1.50.

It seems incredible that Stravinsky would wish to have these pieces recorded; for they are not only musically indigent but outdated. Even if one accepts them as satire, it cannot be said that they are good satire.

The scoring of the first is clever. The eleven instruments are a dulcimer, cymbalum, violin, viola, double bass, flute, clarinet, trumpet, horn, trombone, and percussion. The recording is good.

—P. G.

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VIOLIN

BACH: *Unaccompanied Sonata No. 1, in G Minor*; played by Yehudi Menuhin. Two Victor discs, Nos. 3361-2, price \$1.00.

The supreme test of a violinist's ability is his playing of the Bach unaccompanied Sonatas. They bring out everything he has—including all his faults. If he has the quality of greatness it will be apparent here as nowhere else. That Yehudi Menuhin is successfully meeting the test will be evident to all who follow events in recorded music. Victor has now released three of these sonatas played by this young artist. It is interesting to compare the present recording, made recently in Europe, with that of the Fifth Sonata (or the third, if you segregate the Partitas) made several years ago. Menuhin has passed, since that time, from the prodigy class into the ranks of the foremost violinists of our time.

It is likely that most lovers of this type of music will already own the earlier Columbia recording by Szigeti. Recorded several years ago, it has been long and justly admired. It is not possible for this reviewer to say which version will make the wider appeal. Both have outstanding merits. If Szigeti plays with greater breadth and serenity, Menuhin has more fire and intensity. Both give the proper

impression of spontaneity, but Szigeti is the seasoned master and Menuhin the youthful genius. Szigeti senses the underlying pathos of the first movement to a greater degree than Menuhin, and if his *Fugue* is less genuinely exciting, his *Presto* is more so. In the *Siciliano* Menuhin is more precisely rhythmical, but less moving. Both are well recorded, though there is a greater spaciousness in the Szigeti version, due, no doubt, to playing in a larger hall. Both sets have an unfortunate break in the *Fugue*—so near the end as to seem almost unnecessary. Menuhin gets the whole *Siciliano* on the side with the completion of the *Fugue*, leaving the remaining side for the *Presto*. Szigeti breaks the *Siciliano* and plays the *Presto* considerably faster than his colleague, omitting the last repeat. If on the whole, then, this listener prefers the Szigeti version, he does not feel that his opinion is definitive. Menuhin gives a stunning performance, and one that will appeal to all musicians.

—P. M.

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BACH: *Unaccompanied Partita No. 2, in D Minor*; played by Yehudi Menuhin. Victor Set M232, four discs, price \$8.00.

Of Bach's six suites for solo violin, Nos. One, Three and Five are called sonatas and Two, Four and Six partitas. The line between a sonata and a partita in Bach is a rather thin one. It is therefore less confusing to call them all sonatas. Thus the work here given as *Partita No. Two* is the same as *Sonata No. Four*, of which a recording by Adolf Busch has been in the Victor catalog for some time.

"Everyone who has heard these sonatas", says Schweitzer, "must have realized how sadly his material enjoyment of them falls short of his ideal enjoyment of them. There are many passages in them that the best player cannot render without a certain harshness. The arpeggio harmonies sometimes make a particularly bad effect, even in the finest playing. Polyphonic arpeggio playing is and must be an impossibility. There is some justification for the question whether Bach, in these sonatas, has not overstepped the bounds of artistic possibility. If it be so, he has for

once acted against his own principles, for everywhere else he has been careful to set an instrument only such tasks as it can solve with satisfaction to the ear." He goes on to explain that the arched bow was probably in use in Bach's time. The tightness of this bow was controlled by pressure of the thumb. It was thus possible to play all the strings simultaneously, and chords were not the problem they are today. This bow was discarded, however, as the tone produced with it was too small for public playing. Still Schweitzer continues, "If we have once heard the *Chaconne* in this way, we cannot afterwards endure it any other way."

This *Chaconne* is so stupendous that virtuosi of many other instruments have transcribed it for their own uses. The latest of these adaptations is the recently recorded Stokowski version for orchestra. Like the other movements of the *partita*, the *chaconne* is an idealized dance form. It bears a strong resemblance to the *pascaglia*, with which it is often confused. According to Goetschius the *chaconne* is built on a series of chords, while the *pascaglia* grows out of a ground bass.

Comparison of this and the Busch set is made doubly interesting by the fact that Menuhin was for a time a pupil of Busch. That they did not work together on this Sonata seems evident. Busch's playing has been admired for its rugged sincerity. If in his hands the music seems rather austere, one feels that he believes Bach intended it so. That it need not be so is amply proven by Menuhin. There is a subtle rhythmic freedom in the work of the younger man which is rare as it is delightful. He senses the essential contrapuntal structure of the work. Inner voices, played or implied, come out in an amazing manner. In the playing of chords Busch is usually firmer and smoother, but on every other count we feel that we must give the palm to Menuhin. The fact that Menuhin's tone is richer than that of Busch is accentuated by Busch's higher tuning and the perhaps too great proximity of the microphone. We feel, therefore, that the new recording successfully supplants the old.

—P. M.

ELGAR-SZIGETI: *Serenade*, and *Adieu*. Violin solos played by Joseph Szigeti, with Nikita de Magaloff at the piano. Ten-inch Columbia disc, No. 2150M, price 75c.

Mr. Szigeti here presents us two new typical violin tid-bits. Both numbers are arrangements that the player himself has made. The *Serenade* has a dainty but innocuous melody that is well integrated with the tuneful accompaniment. The *Adieu* is said to be founded upon themes adapted from the Violin Concerto of Elgar, but it suggests none of the essence of that salient work. For this adaptation, we find just another salon piece. Both morceaux have a sleekness and suavity that will endear them to all admirers of Elgar's popular *Salut d'Amour*. Szigeti and his accompanist play them with sympathetic tone, and do not try to make them seem more important than they are. The recording is good.

—A. P. D.

ORGAN

BACH: *Out Of the Depths I Cry to Thee*, Parts 1 and 2. WAGNER: *Dreams*, and SCHUMANN: *Evening Song*, played on the organ by Arthur Gibson. Two Victor discs, Nos. 36165-66, price \$1.25 each.

As everyone knows, organ recordings in the past have seldom been technically successful, and except for occasional ballads on studio or movie organs have been scarce in the American record catalogues. Victor has done us a good turn in releasing these two discs, which faithfully reproduce the organ tone, and which we hope are but the first issues in a series of organ records. The price is moderate, and the artist is the well-liked Archer Gibson, who has long been the private organist in the home of Charles M. Schwab.

This chorale is not one of Bach's best known works. As a matter of fact in the Bach Gesellschaft edition it is listed among the doubtful compositions; however, it is probably a genuine and early example of Bach's chorale prelude. The chorale, which we know as the Lenten hymn *Forty Days*

and *Forty Nights*, is nowhere else used by Bach. Mr. Gibson plays this reflective music simply. In one verse he uses the vox humana stop judiciously; in another, the cornopean sounds a bit wheezy.

Wagner's *Dreams* is the *Träume*, one of the five songs for woman's voice, with words by Mathilde Wesendonck. Wagner himself was well pleased with this song which he wrote as a study for the love music of *Tristan*. Mr. Gibson chooses not to treat it dramatically; a smooth and mellow clarinet carries the melody to a string accompaniment. This number is generally well received on popular organ programs.

The Schumann *Evening Song*, or *Nachtstueck*, is transcribed from the piano. We earnestly hope that it will find its way into the homes of those church-goers who are always pleading with the organist to "please play tuneful music with the chimes and that lovely vox humana."

—A. P. D.

VOCAL

GOUNOD: *Medjé* — *Arabian Song*, with orchestra, and LISZT: *Liebstraum*, with string quartet and piano, sung by Georges Thill, with accompaniments conducted by Eugene Bigot. Columbia disc, No. 7326M, price \$1.50.

Only a few of the more than two hundred songs that Gounod wrote are widely known. One of these, occasionally heard, is *Medjé*, with words, by Jules Barbier, voicing a lover's avowal of the agonies he feels at his proud mistress's indifference. As always with Gounod, the vocal writing is effective, but the simple three verse ballad form gives little chance for variety. Despite the title the composer does not try to give any Oriental atmosphere either in the vocal part or in the accompaniment, which was originally written for piano but is here played by an orchestra.

The other side is an arrangement of the popular piano *Liebstraum*, No. 3, which follows the original closely, even including the two Lisztian cadenzas. To those who will object to this kind of transcrip-

tion it can honestly be said that the mellifluous melody seems almost to demand a human voice for expression.

M. Thill has rarely sung so beautifully as in these two selections. He gives them both a vigor and boldness of utterance, a large vibrant manly tone, a precision of enunciation, and a decided flair of style unexpected in songs which many singers would hardly consider a serious challenge to their best artistry.

—A. P. D.

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HANDEL: *Israel in Egypt* — *The Lord is a man of war*; sung by the Leeds Festival Choir with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thos. Beecham, Columbia ten-inch disc, No. 17044-D, price \$1.00.

From England, land of oratorio, comes this little sample of one of the most famous choral festivals. This event dates back to 1858, when it formed part of the ceremony of the opening of the Leeds Town Hall by Queen Victoria. Such famous conductors as Sterndale Bennett, Costa, Sullivan, Stanford, Nikisch, Elgar, H. P. Allen and Albert Coates have assisted at these festivals, and many famous compositions have had their premieres there.

It is appropriate that this disc should bring us a portion of a Handel work, as this composer was the first and chief glory of English Choral Music. *Israel in Egypt* was composed in 1738, and first performed on April 4, 1739. It was not a popular success, and had to be considerably altered before it could be given again. It was recently heard in a New York revival as part of the Bach-Handel week at the Juilliard School. The male chorus given here — it is a duet for two bass voices in the Handel Gesellschaft Edition — is a vigorous affair, with an opening like one of the arias in the *Messiah*. The choir is obviously well-trained, and under the distinguished direction of Sir Thomas Beecham gives a stirring account of itself. The recording has that characteristic fuzziness which would indicate that it was done at public performance.

—P. M.

LEHMANN, Liza: *Myself When Young*, and TSCHAIKOWSKY: *None But A Lonely Heart*, sung by Lawrence Tibbett, with orchestra, Victor disc No. 1706, ten inch, price \$1.50.

The first of these songs is a bass solo from the song-cycle *In a Persian Garden*, with three quatrains from Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* in the Edward Fitzgerald translation as the text. To us the music seems so very simple a ballad that we find it hard to understand how only forty years ago when the composer's friend George Du Maurier first heard the complete work he said, "I have no doubt it is very clever, but I confess it is too modern for me." Herman Klein spoke of its "unsuspected power and variety of expression, of depth of melodic charm and technical resource." Many older collectors should be glad to have *Myself When Young* refreshed in their memories, while the younger ones should welcome the opportunity to become further acquainted with a group of songs that was phenomenally popular with their parents and of which today most of them will know only the tenor's *Ah! Moon of My Delight*. Tibbett's voice is resonant and smooth in the low-lying phrases and stirring in the declamation of the third stanza, but he inexcusably breaks the last long line by a breath between the words "I went."

On the other side of the record, we find the perennially recurrent *None But the Lonely Heart*, by Tchaikowsky, with a cello obbligato. Tibbett's clear diction aids greatly in the dramatic, rather than sentimental, manner in which he renders this old favorite.

This record gives us good, honest tunes that have found favor with multitudes of average music lovers. The recording has exceptional brilliance and fidelity.

—A. P. D.

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OLD ENGLISH: *Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes*, and *Have You Seen But A Whyte Lillie Grow?*; sung by Jessica Dragonette, accompanied by the Renaissance Quintet. Ten inch Columbia disc, No. 4105M, price \$1.00.

This record attempts to present two of Ben Jonson's most famous lyrics in early

settings for voice, with an appropriate chamber accompaniment by five archaic string instruments—the harpsichord, pardessus de viole, viole d'amour, viole de gambe, and basse de viole. The members of the Quintet are not named on the label, but in a New York concert this season the program gave them as Hans Barth, Edwin Bachman, Jacques Malkin (founder), Otto von Koppenhagen, and Abram Borodkin.

The air of *Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes* is the one that we all are familiar with. The label marks it "early 17th century", but Mr. W. H. Grattan Flood in an article in the *Musical Times* of January 1, 1925, attributes it to Dr. Henry Harrington, of Bath (1727-1816).



JESSICA DRAGONETTE

who sings with Bourdon's Orchestra on Fridays at 8 P. M., E. D. S. T., on a NBC-WEAF network.

The label states that the music of *Have You Seen But A Whyte Lillie Grow?* is anonymous, whereas J. M. Gibbon's *Melody and the Lyric* ascribes it to Alfonso Ferrabosco (died 1627) on the authority of a manuscript in the British Museum. Of the two songs, the latter definitely sounds the older.

Miss Jessica Dragonette is one of the most popular sopranos on the radio, but has won her reputation as a singer of popular music, not on classic songs such as these. The many exaggerated retards she makes in the first number are of questionable effectiveness. Her voice, though

often unsteady, will doubtless please many. Her diction is of such uncommon clearness that it forces upon our attention some defects in the texts she employs. The two lyrics of Ben Johnson, as they appear in the standard editions of the poet's works are two of the most exquisite poems in English literature, and as such should be inviolate to any tampering; they are lilies that need no gilding. Unfortunately the mistakes in the words are found in many copies of the printed songs. In the *To Celia* or *Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes*, Johnson wrote "kiss but in (not 'within') the cup, And I'll not look (not 'ask') for wine." In the other poem, the third stanza of *A Celebration of Charis—Her Triumph*, Johnson wrote "Have you seen but a bright (not 'white') lily grow, Before rude hands have (not 'had') touched it?" and "fall of the snow Before the soil (not 'earth') hath smutched it?" The next line has "wool of the beaver" (not 'wool of beaver'). This may be mere quibbling, but it is disappointing that in a record that could so easily have been a model in two authentic bits of old English music, no one assumed the responsibility of restoring the true texts, free from the common corruptions, in these beautiful lyrics, a common possession of all lovers of English poetry.

—A. P. D.

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REFICE: *Cecilia*, *Aria L'Annuncio*, sung in Italian by Claudia Muzio, with orchestra conducted by the composer. Columbia disc No. 9089M, price \$1.50.

Here is a record to delight all those voice enthusiasts who have long been eager to acquire good examples of the singing of Claudia Muzio. Here they will find captured the power and extraordinary sweetness of her full and *mezza-voce* tones, and her exalted, impassioned intensity of emotional expression.

The music is itself a novelty. *Cecilia* is a religious opera, with libretto by E. Mucci, and music by Linicio Refice. The composer is a Roman musician, the conductor of the Liberiana Choir of the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, and a pro-

fessor at the Pontifical School of Sacred Music; he has written many masses, psalms, cantatas, and a Dante symphonic poem for orchestra and voice, in addition to *Cecilia*.

Since no libretto or score of the opera is available, we are unable to state the dramatic setting of this *Annunciation Scene*. The music, after several hearings, seems in no way really outstanding. It opens with a long meditative introduction for strings and woodwinds, with harmonies suggestive of *Madame Butterfly*, and, in one passage, the *Siegfried Forest Murmurs*, leading up to an orchestral *forte* which supports the voice in a dramatic aria of a sweeping breadth such as we find in most of the modern Italian operas, then gradually dies away, orchestrally, much as it began.

With an indifferent singer as interpreter, many would probably not care particularly for this music; but Muzio's genius transforms that standardized type of Italian opera excerpt into a real prize for every collector of the records of great voices. To hear it at its best, it must be played at full volume.

—A. P. D.

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SCHUBERT: *Der Doppelgänger*; and *Ständchen*; sung by Richard Tauber, with orchestra directed by Dr. Weissmann. Columbia ten inch disc, No. 1099M, price \$1.00.

Tauber's admirers will find him in good voice in these recordings. From an interpretive standpoint, however, this disc is disappointing in part. Tauber's interpretation of Schubert's dramatic *Doppelgänger* lacks breadth and conviction. His singing of the *Serenade*, on the other hand, is delightful. It is in music of lyric character that this fine singer is at his best. We wish someone would suggest to Tauber that he re-record a number of the Grieg and Strauss songs which he made some years ago. For these — from an interpretive standpoint — still remain unexcelled. Needless to say, such re-recordings would be preferred without orchestral accompaniment. The recording here is good.

—P. G.



LOTTE LEHMANN

STRAUSS, Johann: *Die Fledermaus*, *Csardas*; and *Mein Herr, was dachten Sie von mir*; sung by Lotte Lehmann. Columbia disc No. 4101M, ten inch, price \$1.00.

The incomparable Lotte Lehmann turns her attentions to light opera for a change. In our estimation, no one could have sung this music more charmingly or more expressively than Mme. Lehmann. She has a sense of rhythmic spontaneity which makes her interpretations of opera or lieder both distinctive and individual. In the *Csardas*, she catches and conveys the lilt and flow of its gypsy spirit in a rare manner. Her command of expressive color is rarely set forth in these recordings.

—P. H. R.

In the Popular Vein

By VAN

VOCAL

AAAA—*I Live In My Dreams*, and *Love Passes By*, sung by Tullio Carminati. Columbia 3023-D.

When you learn that one of your favorite dramatic actors has made a vocal record, you are likely to be less surprised at his being able to sing well than you are at his being able to sing at all. When Mr. Carminati, therefore, turns in a job of vocalizing that would do credit to most of our non-acting radio and record singers, you are quite prepared to hear that he began his artistic career as an opera singer, which was, indeed, the case. He does what he is able to with these fairly commonplace Schert-zinger numbers, but does it with an unflinching taste and refinement which could well serve as an object lesson to so many, many singers that we can all think of.

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AAAA—*Dinah*, and *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, sung by The Boswell Sisters. Brunswick 7412.

The first of the really hot sister teams, the Boswells are still the best and it isn't difficult to know the reason after hearing this disc. Eschewing the laborious tricks and mannerisms of their competitors, they depend more than ever upon sincere emotion, simplicity of expression and a lusty and engaging humor in their hot singing. These recordings feature fine guitar work in the accompaniments and are probably products of Brunswick's busy West Coast studio.

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AAA—*Would There Be Love*, and *Devil In the Moon*, sung by Gertrude Niesen. Columbia 3021-D.

Those who admire Miss Niesen's throaty contralto over the air will undoubtedly be attracted by this disc, since she records rather infrequently and this is a good example of her work. We think her popularity is destined to be short-lived, since her vocal methods are forced and unnatural, and even the lay public becomes gradually aware of such things, but while it lasts, she is one of the more individual figures on the air waves. *Devil In the Moon*, written by Alex Hill, is a quite enchanting tune, and is well suited to Miss Niesen's talents.

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AAA—*Basin Street Blues*, and *Melancholy Baby*, sung by Al Bowlly, with orchestra accompaniment arranged and conducted by Ray Noble. Victor 25007.

When an Englishman sings blues of Americans, that's news. Even if it isn't such very

good blues singing, we need not be too captious. Hands across the sea, and all that sort of thing, you know. To be scrupulously fair to Mr. Bowlly, he stands comparison quite favorably with the average domestic product, being quite as good as some and a good deal better than most. Of principal interest, possibly, are Noble's accompaniments, which are fascinating in their musical interest, even though they are of exceedingly doubtful authenticity.

BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*She's A Latin From Manhattan*, and *About a Quarter to Nine*, Johnny Green and his Orchestra. Columbia 3029-D.

Of all commercial band-leaders in the public eye today, none exceeds Green in his ability to invest everything he handles with the golden touch of sheer musicianship and originality. In these four numbers from the current film, *Go Into Your Dance*, he is in fine fettle, and the former disc is particularly full of utterly delightful touches that make one want to exclaim for their freshness and piquancy. No one handles an extremely advanced harmonic idiom with his skill and accompaniment. His sense of orchestral color is becoming constantly more sensitive and knowing. Green is tops in his medium. May he have one-quarter the popular success of such blatant mediocrities as Lombardo, say, or Duchin.

* * * *

AAAA—*Hooray for Love*, and *I'm Livin' In a Great Big Way*, Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25011.

Whether Goodman is doing a blazing job on some hot masterpiece or indulging in the somewhat more modified raptures of the commercial dance arrangement, he is certain to grade "A". Here, as usual, there is style and rhythmic vitality without any sacrifice of clarity or danceability. His own clarinetting is conspicuous (which is as it should be) and the record as a whole, while of less interest to the connoisseur than his more torrid efforts, is an excellent example of how good a perfectly straightforward piece of dance playing can be.

* * * *

AAA—*Experiment*, and *Driftin' Tide*, Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 25006.

Experiment is another of those top-hole numbers that Cole Porter wrote for last season's London success, *Nymph Errant*. Constant readers of this department (if any) have probably gotten pretty sick of our dithyrambics on the subject of Cole Porter, so we'll be content with saying that this may not be Porter at his very best, but it is still miles ahead of almost any other writer's

best. The highest praise one can give to Noble's performance is to say that he plays it as though he were fully aware of what a swell number it is and "gives" accordingly.

AAA—*Once Upon a Midnight, and Restless*. Hal Kemp and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7413.

Better-than-average tunes done with Kemp's habitual skill and mercifully free from his too frequent fault of what might be termed arpeggiotis of the saxes and clarinets. It is pleasant to know that Kemp's superior work is having a richly deserved success, both in his personal appearances at the Pennsylvania and in his discs.

AA—*Tell Me That You Love Me, and Amorita*. Enrie Madriguera and his Orchestra. Victor 24897.

Amorita is labelled a "rumba-waltz", and if you are able to figure that one out, you are a better man than I am. A rumba is a rumba, and a waltz is likewise a waltz, but a "rumba-waltz"! I ask you! It turns out to be a waltz, at least, with each beat strongly accentuated by use of rumba percussion instruments. Madriguera wrote it himself and it is a rather novel and attractive little whimsy while *Tell Me That You Love Me* is a waltz which — under its Italian title — has been the current rage of Italy and elsewhere on the continent. Madriguera handles both numbers with surety and with full appreciation of their exotic charm.

AA—*El Relicario and Allah's Holiday*. Ray Noble and his Orchestra. Victor 24391.

This record will probably be a prodigious money-maker for Victor but there isn't much in the way of praise that one can say about it. The former is given treatment identical to that of Noble's phenomenally successful *Lady of Spain*, while the latter is plainly patterned upon his more recent Japanese Sandman. Both are apparently deliberately unoriginal and therefore should not be criticized as though they were intended to be anything but carbon copies of other discs. In each case, superb performances are lavished upon highly unimportant material.

HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*The Dixieland Band, and Hunkadola*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25009.

Goodman and his remarkable band, recently signed up for Victor, do wonders with these. Representing a compromise between the rough-and-ready type of hot band and the silken perfection of the commercial radio band, they manage to fuse the best features of each and are unquestionably the outstanding dance band on the air waves at the present time. Their arrangements, mostly written by Fletcher Henderson and Benny Carter, are superlative and the solos and ensemble playing are perfection, particularly Goodman's incomparable clarinet work, which is generously present on both sides of this disc. *The Dixieland Band*, a grand swing

number, features the singing of Helen Ward, a vocalist quite worthy of the band with which she is associated.

AAAA—*With All My Heart and Soul, and The Night Is Blue*. Red Norvo and his Swing Septet. Columbia 3026-D.

In the manner of his *I Surrender, Dear*, of several months ago, Norvo gives us work of exquisite refinement here. Consisting almost entirely of solos, much naturally depends upon the quality of these solos. In the case of Teddy Wilson on piano, Jack Jennie (I believe) on trombone and Norvo's own extraordinary adroit work on xylophone, all is tops. Somewhat less satisfactory is the brief tenor solo of Charlie Barnett, but all the rest is so tremendously good that it requires a place on the preferred list for the month.

AAA—*Oh Suzanna, Dust Off That Old Pianna, and I Ain't Got Nobody*. "Fats" Waller and his Rhythm. Victor 24888.

Those who had feared that the commercial influence of the radio might succeed in house-breaking the rotund "Fats" will be pleased to learn that he is more like the old "Fats" than ever in this pair. With his nimble-fingered pianistics and his rousish vocalizing, he is always a sheer joy when he is really working, and this is by all odds his finest disc in many months. Get a load of Waller and forget about such depressing phenomena as Garber or Abe Lyman.

AAA—*Put On An Old Pair of Shoes, and I'm Livin' In a Great Big Way*. Louis Prima and his New Orleans Gang. Brunswick 7419.

Those who have been predicting for the past several years that there would be a revival of the pre-Whitman or Dixieland type of jazz have had their predictions verified by recent events. Wingy Mannone and Louis Prima both from the heart of the South and both exponents of what might be considered as "pure jazz", have had conspicuous triumphs in New York this season and seem to have provided jaded cosmopolites with a new thrill, or at least a renewal of an old thrill. This is a good example of Prima's work. Currently at the Famous Door, he blows and sings hot and heavy and, aided by a few handsmen of like sympathies, gives you an idea of what jazz is really like when stripped of non-essentials.

AA—*Itchola, by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, and Love and a Dime*, by Jan Garber and his Orchestra. Victor 24885.

Itchola will be recognized as the same number that appeared on Columbia some time ago under the title of *I've Got It*, by Teagarden and his Chicago outfit. Whiteman does a good enough job on it to make you wish he had done an even better one. In fact, the part which should have been the best of all, Teagarden's solo, is definitely disappointing and suggests that Jack is not improving by his association with the self-designated King of Jazz.

Radio Notes of Interest

Five thousand singers, representing choral groups well known throughout the Eastern States, will take part in a choir festival to be broadcast, in part, from Princeton, N. J., over National Broadcasting Company networks on Friday and Saturday, June 7 and 8.

The festival is an annual affair held under the auspices of the Westminster Choir School of Princeton. The famed Westminster Choir, heard frequently over NBC networks, will present two concerts during the series, and for the third program, will join guest groups in Palmer Stadium at Princeton University. Dr. John Finley Williamson, director of the school, will direct the combined chorus of 5,000 voices.

The opening festival program will feature the Westminster Choir over an NBC-WEAF network from 5:00 to 6:00 p. m., E. D. S. T., on Friday, June 7, in part one of Bach's mass in B Minor. The chorists will be heard from the Princeton University Chapel.

Alumni of the Westminster Chorus, present members, and singers who will be heard with the group next year, will be presented in an hour concert over an NBC-WJZ network at 3:00 p. m., E. D. S. T., on Saturday, June 8.

The broadcast will open with a group of songs by the future Westminster Choir, another suite by the present organization, followed in turn with selections by alumni members, and by the combined three groups of singers.

The Festival chorus, of 5,000 voices, will be heard over an NBC-WEAF network from 6:00 to 6:30 p. m., E. D. S. T., on Saturday. The program will be opened by the Princeton Band. In addition to the combined choruses, the congregation will join in the singing of many of the numbers.

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Isidor Philipp, dean of French musicians who during his brief visit to this country is limiting his public appearances to broadcasts over an NBC-WJZ network, began a series of four Sunday programs (10:30 to 11:00 p. m., E. D. S. T.), on May 26.

In the first program, assisted by Josef Stopak, Leon Fleitman and Oswald Mazucchi, Philipp played Charles Marei Widor's quartet for piano and strings. On June 2 he will be heard in his former teacher, Saint-Saens' rarely heard Septuor for piano, strings and trumpet. The program for June 9 will consist of Saint-Saens' Second Trio, in E minor, in which M. Philipp will be assisted by Josef Stopak, violinist, and Oswald Mazucchi, cellist. For his closing program on June 16 he will play a program of his own piano compositions.

For more than thirty years M. Philipp was head of the piano department of the Paris Conservatoire.

Margaret Speaks, young American soprano who came to New York a few years ago to seek musical fame, has arrived at her goal over National Broadcasting Company networks.

Miss Speaks, who was heard in duets with Richard Crooks, Gladys Swarthout and Nelson Eddy during the Spring and Winter Voice of Firestone broadcasts, has attracted such favorable attention that she is to be featured as the leading soloist in her own Voice of Firestone programs.

The soprano soloist, who is the latest young artist to find fame in the field of serious music via the microphone, will alternate with Miss Swarthout throughout June and early July on the Monday night broadcasts over an NBC-WEAF network at 8:30 p. m., E. D. S. T.

The talented niece of the noted composer, Oley Speaks, Miss Speaks came to New York from Ohio State University and began her musical career in vaudeville and musical comedy. Later she turned her attention to radio and has been heard in several NBC series. She also appeared on the concert platform in joint concerts with her uncle, before joining the Voice of Firestone cast.

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Tuesday, June 4, at 1:30 p. m., E. D. S. T., the Gordon String Quartet will continue its Beethoven cycle over an NBC-WEAF network. Beethoven's *Opus 18, No. 5, in A Major*, and the *Opus 135, in F Major*, will be broadcast during this hour program.

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Julia Glass, pianist; Rose Polnarioff, violinist, and Phyllis Krauter, cellist, will play a new *Trio in C Minor* by Gaspar Cassado on Saturday, June 8, at 3:30 p. m., E. D. S. T., over an NBC-WEAF network. Cassado is a native of Catalan, Spain, and famous throughout Europe as a cello virtuoso. He is a pupil of his distinguished fellow countryman, Pablo Casals.

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Frank Black and his String Symphony will play a program composed of Weiner's *Divertimento*, Goldoni's *Intermezzo*, and Dvorak's *Nocturne* on Sunday, June 9, at 8 p. m., E. D. S. T., over an NBC-WJZ network.

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The Gordon String Quartet will play Beethoven's *Quartets, Opus 18, No. 3*, and *Opus 127*, in the Music Guild Program of June 11th, 1:30 p. m., E. D. S. T., over an NBC-WEAF network.

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Anne Turkel, dramatic soprano, who will be heard in three song recitals over NBC-WEAF network on June 4th, 11th and 18th, arose from a candy salesgirl in Chicago to a Chicago opera soloist.

Our Radio Dial

Time indicated is Eastern Daylight Saving Time — Subject to change

SUNDAY

- 10:30 AM—Morning Musicale (NBC-WJZ)
- 11:00 AM—Brown String Quartet (NBC-WJZ)
- 12 Noon —Salt Lake City Choir and Organ (CBS-WABC)
- 12:30 PM—Radio City Music Hall Concert (NBC-WJZ)
- 1:00 PM—Perole String Quartet (BBS-WOR)
- 1:45 PM—Paul Alpert, pianist (BBS-WOR)
- 2:15 PM—Henri Deering, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—Temple of Song (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:30 PM—Penthouse Serenade (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:45 PM—Concert Orchestra (BBS-WOR)
- 7:15 PM—Chamber Music (BBS-WOR)
- 7:30 PM—Fireside Recitals (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—Frank Black's String Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Detroit Symphony (CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—June 23-30—Goldman's Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 10:30 PM—Isidor Philipp and assisting artists (NBC-WJZ)
- 10:30 PM—Liebling's Operatic Miniatures (BBS-WOR)

MONDAY

- 2:15 PM—Claire Vermonte, soprano (BBS-WOR)
- 2:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 5:00 PM—June 3 only—Toscanini (NBC-WEAF)
- 6:00 PM—U. S. Army Band
- 7:30 PM—Kurt Brownell, tenor (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—The Voice of Firestone (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—A. & P. Gypsies (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Gus Edwards' Radio Review (BBS-WOR)
- 12:00 Mid—Duluth Civic Symphony Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)

TUESDAY

- 1:00 PM—Grace Panvini (BBS-WOR)
- 1:15 PM—Pauline Alpert, pianist (BBS-WOR)
- 1:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 2:30 PM—Light Opera (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:15 PM—Frank Ricciardi (BBS-WOR)
- 4:30 PM—Marie de Ville, songs (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:30 PM—Temple of Song (NBC-WJZ)
- 5:00 PM—June 4-11-18 Anne Turkel (NBC-WEAF)
- 6:30 PM—Russian Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Ben Bernie and his Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:30 PM—Wallenstein's Sinfonietta (BBS-WOR)
- 9:30 PM—Concert Orchestra—Joseph Littan (NBC-WJZ)
- 10:00 PM—Beauty Box Theatre—Operetta (NBC-WEAF)

WEDNESDAY

- 10:15 AM—Florendo Trio (NBC-WJZ)
- 1:00 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)

- 2:00 PM—Two Seats in the Balcony, Variety Musicale (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:30 PM—Lucy Monroe, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
- 5:30 PM—James Wilkinson, baritone (NBC-WEAF)
- 6:30 PM—Concert Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
- 7:30 PM—Corinna Mura, Spanish Songstress (BBS-WOR)
- 8:30 PM—Eddy Brown, violinist (BBS-WOR)
- 10:00 PM—The Channing Choir (BBS-WOR)
- 10:30 PM—America in Music (NBC-WJZ)
- 10:30 PM—Howard Barlow's Orchestra (CBS-WABC)

THURSDAY

- 11:30 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 1:00 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
- 2:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:45 PM—Walter Preston, baritone (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:00 PM—Little Symphony — Philip James (BBS-WOR)
- 8:00 PM—Rudy Vallee Hour (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Show Boat (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:30 PM—June 20, 27—Goldman's Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:45 PM—Cyril Pitts, tenor (NBC-WJZ)
- 10:00 PM—Paul Whiteman's Music Hall (NBC-WEAF)

FRIDAY

- 3:00 PM—John Uppman and Claire Vermonte (BBS-WOR)
- 4:30 PM—U. S. Army Band (CBS-WABC)
- 5:00 PM—June 7—Westminster Choir (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Paul Alpert, pianist (BBS-WOR)
- 8:00 PM—Bourdon's Orch.—Jessica Dragonette (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—Waltz Time—Frank Munn and Bernice Claire (NBC-WEAF)
- 10:00 PM—Sandra Swenska, Russian Chanteuse (BBS-WOR)
- 10:30 PM—Lucille Manners, soprano (NBC-WJZ)

SATURDAY

- 11:00 AM—Cincinnati Conservatory of Music (CBS-WABC)
- 12:15 PM—Genia Fonariova, soprano (NBC-WJZ)
- 12:45 PM—Pauline Alpert, pianist (BBS-WOR)
- 3:00 PM—June 8—Westminster Choir (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:30 PM—Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:15 PM—Carol Deis, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
- 6:00 PM—June 8—Westminster Choir (NBC-WEAF)
- 6:15 PM—Concert Miniatures (CBS-WABC)
- 6:35 PM—June 8, Alma Kitchell (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:00 PM—U. S. Navy Band (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—June 22, 29—Goldman Band (NBC-WJZ)

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